The main features of the Agreement on the setting up of Radio Telescope are as follows:

(i) This poject shall be executed by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics and the Raman Research Institute on behalf of the Government of India and the University of Mauritius on behalf of the Government of Maritius;

(ii) The Radio Telescope to be set up will consist of installations for reception and recording of radio-astronomical data. The related electronic system will be designed or constructed in India;

(iii) The Government of Mauritius will make available the land. The University of Mauritius will provide for the development of the necessary infrastructure according to the specifications given by the Indian scientists as well as the logistic support for the installation of equipment and day-to-day running of the project;

(iv) The Government of Mauritius will protect the frequency bands used for Radio astronomical work; these radio frequencies shall be selected in accordance with the international radio regulations;

(v) The Mauritian scientists and technicians will be given training in India in various aspects of astronomical and related technology;

(vi) Materials and equipment imported into Mauritius in connection with the installation and functioning of the Radio Telescope will be exempted from all duties and taxes;

(vii) Title of all materials, equipment or other items of the property used in connection with the Radio Telescope will remain with the Government of India;

(viii) The Government of Mauritius will give due protection to the property and personnel of the telescope project;

This Agreement shall remain valid for a period of five years and shall automatically be extended for further period of five years at a time, unless either party gives written notice to the other six months in advance of its intention to terminate it.

Pakistan requests to France for supply of Mirage fighter Jets

*195. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of Pakistan's recent request to France for the supply of 40 Mirage 2000 advanced fighter jets;

(b) if so, whether this is likely to have strategic implications for the Indian Air Force; and

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. RAJA RAMANNA): (a) Goernment is aware of the press report regarding such a request having been made by Pakistan. However, the report has been denied by the French Government.

(b) If acquired, these aircraft would enhance the multi-role capability of Pakistan Air Force.

(c) All developments having a bearing in India's security are kept under constant review by the Government and all necessary measures are taken to safeguard it. It will not be in public interest to divulge details.

US General Electric F-404 Engines for Light Combat Aircraft

*196. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the first 50 units of the advanced Light combat aircraft being developed indigenously are to be fitted with imported U.S. General Electric F-404 engines;